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RUEHBL/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 1280
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 4011
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 2207
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 8634
RUEHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 6641
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 9501
INFO RUEHRH/USELO RIYADH PRIORITY 4792
RUEHJI/AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY 1102
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S E C R E T AMMAN 07694

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, OVIP (SPECTER, ARLAN), JC, US
SUBJECT: CODEL SPECTER'S AUDIENCE WITH KING HUSSEIN

1. S - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: KING HUSSEIN RECEIVED SENATOR ARLAN SPECTER IN A ONE-HOUR AUDIENCE AT THE PALACE ON MONDAY, AUGUST 14. THE KING EXPRESSED HIS PESSIMISM OVER CHANCES FOR PROGRESS ON THE PEACE FRONT. HIS THEME WAS THAT JORDAN REMAINS PREPARED TO ENTER PEACE TALKS WITH ISRAEL WITHOUT CONDITIONS BASED ON UNSC 242 (LAND FOR PEACE) BUT THAT WASHINGTON MUST PLAY A MORE EVEN-HANDED ROLE AS MEDIATOR IF U.S. IS TO REGAIN THE CENTRAL ROLE IN SUCH TALKS. THE KING ALSO DISCUSSED ARAFAT AND THE PLO, JORDANIAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS, THE AQABA PIPELINE (SEPTEL), AND CONGRESSIONAL EFFORTS TO MOVE THE U.S. EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM. END SUMMARY.

3. KING HUSSEIN RECEIVED SENATOR ARLAN SPECTER AND HIS COUNSEL PAUL MICHELLE IN A ONE-HOUR AUDIENCE HELD AT THE PALACE IN AMMAN AUGUST 14. THE MEETING OCCURRED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE PARTY'S ARRIVAL FROM CAIRO. ALSO ATTENDING WERE CHIEF OF ROYAL DIWAN MARWAN KASIM, COURT MINISTER ADNAN ABU ODEH AND CHARGE.

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THE PEACE PROCESS

4. ASKED WHAT WERE HIS PRESENT VIEWS ON THE ARAB-ISRAEL PROBLEM, THE KING REPLIED THAT HE SAW LITTLE CHANCE OF PROGRESS TOWARD A SETTLEMENT IN THE NEAR TERM.

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IN FACT, THERE WAS A REAL QUESTION IN HIS MIND NOW WHETHER THE TIME FOR ANY SETTLEMENT HAD PAST. HE NOTED THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS AND THE MOVE TOWARD EXTREMES, THE CONTINUED SETTLEMENTS ACTIVITY IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, THE ONGOING DIVISIONS IN THE ARAB WORLD, AND U.S. FAILURE TO PLAY AN EVEN-HANDED ROLE AS ALL INHIBITING THE QUEST FOR PEACE. HE DISCUSSED THESE POINTS IN GENERALLY FAMILIAR TERMS.

U.S.-JORDANIAN RELATIONS

5. THE SENATOR ASKED IF THE KING VIEWED PRESIDENT REAGAN'S 1982 M.E. PEACE INITIATIVE AS EVEN-HANDED. THE KING JUMPED IMMEDIATELY TO POINT OUT THAT JORDAN HAD ACCEPTED THE REAGAN PLAN EVEN WHEN MANY OTHERS IN THE AREA INCLUDING ISRAEL HAD REJECTED IT. THERE WERE SOME AREAS THAT NEEDED CLARIFICATION, BUT OVER ALL IT WAS A COURAGEOUS STEP BY THE PRESIDENT. THE KING SAID HE WORKED HARD TO GET OTHER ARAB STATES TO ACCEPT IT. HE POINTEDLY EMPHASIZED A SECOND TIME THAT EVEN AMERICA'S FRIENDS, THE ISRAELIS, HAD REJECTED IT; BUT JORDAN HAD AGREED.

6. THE KING THEN CITED AN EXAMPLE OF LACK OF EVEN HANDEDNESS: WHEN IN WASHINGTON IN FEBRUARY HE HAD BROUGHT A DRAFT UNSC RESOLUTION ON SETTLEMENTS. IT WAS "SHOT DOWN" BY WASHINGTON. IN FACT, HE SAID, HE GOT NEGATIVE REPLIES ON SEVERAL ISSUES ON THE SAME DAY. IN A SORT OF COUP DE GRAS THE KING SAID HE REALLY COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WASHINGTON ANYMORE. HE HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN SAYING HOW PLEASED HE WAS WITH THE KING'S GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE AMBASSADOR. SHORTLY THEREAFTER HE LEARNED THE AMBASSADOR WAS BEING REMOVED.

THE ROLE OF ARAFAT AND THE PLO

7. SENATOR SPECTER ASKED ABOUT ARAFAT'S ROLE. HUSSEIN SAID ARAFAT HAD DEFINITELY BEEN WEAKENED BY THE SPLIT IN THE PLO BUT THAT NO OTHER SPOKESMAN HAD COME FORWARD. THE WEST BANKERS, HE SAID, WERE THE ONES WHO HAD TO BE INVOLVED. AT ANOTHER POINT THE KING DISMISSED ARAFAT WITH A WAVE OF THE HAND SAYING THAT HE (THE KING) ALWAYS ADDRESSED HIS

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REMARKS TO THOSE WHO COME TO AMMAN WITH ARAFAT. ARAFAT MAY BE THE PALESTINIAN SPOKESMAN BUT HE BRINGS A LOT OF PROBLEMS AS WELL. "THE PALESTINIANS NEED A BETTER SPOKESMAN," HE CONCLUDED.

JERUSALEM

8. THE KING RAISED RECENT MOVES IN CONGRESS TO LEGISLATE THE MOVE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN ISRAEL FROM TEL AVIV TO JERUSALEM AS YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF AMERICAN ACTIONS TAKEN TO THE DIRECT DETRIMENT OF U.S. INTERESTS. DID THE SENATOR REALIZE HOW EMOTIONAL AN ISSUE THIS WAS FOR ARABS? SENATOR RESPONDED THAT HE HAD LEARNED IN HIS TALKS IN

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CAIRO AND RIYADH JUST HOW MAJOR AN ISSUE THIS WAS. HE NOTED THE PRESIDENT'S CLEAR OPPOSITION TO ANY LEGISLATION AND SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT CONGRESS TO TAKE ACTION DURING THIS SESSION. OF COURSE, HE ADDED, ANY MEMBER OF CONGRESS COULD EXERCISE HIS RIGHT TO INTRODUCE AN AMENDMENT TO PENDING LEGISLATION. THE KING LINKED CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON JERUSALEM TO HIS EARLIER THEME THAT U.S. WAS NO LONGER PLAYING AN EVEN-HANDED ROLE IN THE AREA.

JORDANIAN-SYRIAN RELATIONS

9. IN RESPONSE TO SENATOR SPECTER'S QUESTION ON SYRIAN-JORDANIAN RELATIONS, THE KING DESCRIBED THEM AS "TENSE", BUT ADDED "LESS SO NOW PERHAPS THAN SEVERAL MONTHS AGO." HE SAID THERE WAS NO DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. IN FACT RELATIONS HAD NOT BEEN GOOD SINCE SYRIA ENTERED LEBANON IN FEBRUARY 1976. HE CITED THESE AREAS OF DIFFICULTY:

-- (A) IRAQ/IRAN: SYRIA SUPPORTS IRAN WHILE JORDAN SUPPORTS IRAQ. IRAN IS A THREAT TO THE ENTIRE ARAB WORLD FOSTERING DISSENT BETWEEN SUNNI AND SHI'ITE MUSLIMS. ALSO IRAQ IS AN ARAB LEAGUE COUNTRY AND SYRIA SHOULD STAND WITH IRAQ AS JORDAN HAD BEEN PRESSURED TO STAND WITH OTHER ARAB STATES IN 1967 EVEN WHEN JORDAN KNEW THE CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE DISASTROUS.

-- (B) PALESTINIANS: THE SYRIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WAS "TO LEAVE IT TO FUTURE GENERATIONS." HE EXPLAINED THAT SYRIA ARGUED AGAINST ANY NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL UNTIL THE ARABS (READ SYRIA) AND ISRAEL WERE ON A MILITARY PARITY. THAT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN BECAUSE THE U.S. WOULD ENSURE ISRAEL'S TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY AND, FRANKLY, ISRAELIS ARE JUST BETTER EDUCATED, TRAINED AND DISCIPLINED. CONSEQUENTLY, THE SYRIANS ARE MERELY USING THIS ARGUMENT TO PUT OFF DEALING WITH THE ISRAELIS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME THE SYRIANS MANEUVER TO KEEP JORDAN, THE PALESTINIANS AND OTHER ARABS FROM REACHING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING ON HOW TO TALK WITH THE ISRAELIS NOW. THEY ARE THE "SPOILERS" IN THE REGION, HE SAID.

-- (C) EGYPT: EGYPT IS PART OF THE ARAB WORLD AND THERE MUST BE SOME SEMBLANCE OF RELATIONS. SYRIA HAS REFUSED TO OPEN A DIALOGUE WITH EGYPT IN CONTRAST TO JORDAN WHICH HAS GOOD RELATIONS (SIC). SYRIA HAS FOILED ALL EFFORTS TO REGULARIZE RELATIONS WITH EGYPT. JORDAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, WORKED OPENLY AT CASABLANCA AT THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE TO HELP EGYPT RETURN TO ITS TRADITIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ARAB GOVERNMENTS.

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10. COMMENT: THE KING PROVIDED SENATOR WITH A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION. HE BEMOANED THE LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE IN RECENT YEARS AND EXPRESSED HIS

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OWN PESSIMISM FOR THE FUTURE GIVEN THE TRENDS
IN ISRAEL AND THE ARAB WORLD. HE STRONGLY URGED
THE U.S. TO PLAY A MORE EVEN-HANDED ROLE IN THE
REGION. IN DOING SO, AND IN FAILING TO MENTION
THE SOVIET PROPOSAL ON A GENEVA-TYPE PEACE
CONFERENCE, THE KING LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT IN
SPITE OF OTHER PUBLIC REMARKS HE HAS NOT ALL
TOGETHER WRITTEN THE U.S. OUT OF A LEADING ROLE
IN THE PEACE PROCESS. HE CONTINUES TO HOPE FOR
A U.S. INITIATIVE THAT HE CAN SUPPORT.

GNEHM

END OF MESSAGE

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